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March 21, 2017

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

James Comey
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Attorney General Sessions and Director Comey,

We are writing today to draw your attention to an apparent uptick in the disappearance of young girls of color across the nation. It is critical that your agencies devote the resources necessary to determine whether these developments are an anomaly, or whether they are indicative of an underlying trend that must be addressed.

Earlier this month, the Washington, D.C. Metro Police Department tweeted a series of profiles of missing children, all of whom are Black or Latina. These tweets quickly went viral, attracting media attention, and causing alarm among community leaders, parents, and child safety advocates.

Ten children of color went missing in our nation's capital in a period of two weeks, and, at first, garnered very little media attention. That's deeply disturbing, and has drawn attention to a nationwide problem: when children of color go missing, authorities often assume they are runaways, rather than victims of abduction. Whether these recent disappearances are an anomaly or signals of underlying trend, it is essential that the Department of Justice and the FBI use all of the tools at their disposal to help local officials investigate these events, and return these children to their parents as quickly as possible.

Government has no more important role than protecting our children. We know all levels of government, including the Department of Justice, take this responsibility seriously. We ask you to work with our local communities to look into these reports, determine what is going on, and provide the proper support to respond.

Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Cedric L. Richmond
Chairman



Eleanor H. Norton
Member of Congress

